

## Message Text

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60

ACTION NEA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 OES-03 IO-10 EUR-12 SP-02 AID-05 EB-07

NSC-05 CIEP-01 TRSE-00 SS-15 STR-01 OMB-01 CEA-01

CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 PA-01 USIA-06 PRS-01

INT-05 COME-00 /093 W

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R 121548Z MAR 75

FM AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2088

INFO AMEMBASSY RABAT

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY TUNIS

USDA WASHDC

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE ALGIERS 0679

E.O. 11652:N/A

TAGS: EAGR, AG

SUBJ: EFFECTS OF DROUGHT ON ALGERIAN AGRICULTURE

USDA FOR FAS

REFS: (A) ALGIERS 0307 (B) ALGIERS 0515 (C) ALGIERS 0220

(D) ALGIERS 0156

1. DR. CHARLES BALDI, FRENCH RESEARCH EXPERT  
AT THE WORLD METEOROLOGICAL OFFICE OF THE UN,  
GAVE A LECTURE IN ALGERIA ON "EFFECTS OF THE  
WINTER 74/75 DROUGHT ON ALGERIAN AGRICULTURE"  
ON MONDAY, MARCH 10, 1975.

2 DR. BALDI SAID AUTUMN RAINS IN ALGERIA WERE  
SATISFACTORY EXCEPT IN THE WEST. THE RAINS STOPPED  
EARLY, HOWEVER, AND BY JANUARY A POTENTIALLY  
CATASTROPHIC SITUATION WAS DEVELOPING. IN THE  
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LAST MONTH OR SO ENOUGH RAIN HAS FALLEN IN THE

ALGIERS AREA AND EASTERN REGIONS OF ALGERIA TO  
LARGELY ALLEVIATE THE DROUGHT. ALGIERS AREA  
NORMALLY RECEIVES TOO MUCH RAIN IN ANY CASE, SO  
THIS YEAR'S LOWER THAN NORMAL RAINFALL IS NOT  
DANGEROUS FOR AGRICULTURE IN THE CENTER OF ALGERIA.  
HOWEVER, THE CONTINUING DRY SPELL IN THE WEST, THRU  
DECEMBER, IS THE FIRST IN THE HISTORY OF AVAILABLE  
STATISTICS (SINCE 1840). THE AGRICULTURAL SITUATION  
THERE IS VERY BAD, AND WORSE IN MOROCCO. ORCHARDS  
AND VINYARDS ARE NOT TOO BAD OFF WITH THE EXCEPTION  
OF OLIVES, WHICH WILL SUFFER A GREAT DEAL. IN  
GRAINS IT IS A CRITICAL SITUATION (IN THE WEST)  
THAT ONLY A WEATHER MIRACLE COULD SAVE. BALDI  
PREDICTS A WHEAT HARVEST OF 50 PERCENT LESS THAN LAST  
YEAR WHICH WAS NOT A GOOD YEAR EITHER. THIS WILL  
PUT ALGERIA IN A SERIOUS DEFICIT GRAIN POSITION  
AND HE THUS FORECASTS THE NECESSITY OF IMPORTANT  
PURCHASES OF FOREIGN WHEAT. THE ALGERIAN'S BEST  
CHANCE OF RECUPERATING SOMETHING FROM THIS HARVEST  
WILL BE TO USE THE GRAIN AS FEED AND HAY. BALDI  
FEELS THIS WOULD BE A BETTER USE OF THE EXTREMELY  
POOR QUALITY HARVEST THAN TO TRY TO USE IT AS WHEAT.

3. BALDI ALSO COMMENTED ON ALGERIA' SNEED, IN HIS  
OPINION, TO GO INTO WHEAT IRRIGATION PROJECTS, SUCH  
AS HAVE BEEN SUCCESSFUL IN MEXICO.

4. A CHECK WITH GERMAN AGRICULTURAL ATTACHE,  
UK AGRICULTURAL ADVISOR AND AMERICAN CYMMET EXPERT  
ALL AGREE WITH BALDI'S PREDICTION OF A GRAIN HARVEST  
OF ABOUT 50 PERCENT OF LAST YEARS. OFFICIAL  
ALGERIANS ARE USUAL NON-COMMUNICATIVE SELVES ON  
HARVEST. DROUGHT AREA EXTENDS INTO CENTRAL ALGERIA  
ONCE ONE PASSES OVER FIRST BARRIER OF MOUNTAINS.  
OUR BEST ESTIMATE OF LAST YEAR'S CROP WHICH WAS NOT  
A GOOD YEAR, IS UNDER ONE MILLION TONS, SO THIS  
YEAR'S PRODUCTION WILL BE IN 500 THOUSAND TON AREA.  
OUR ESTIMATE OF ALGERIAN CONSUMPTION IS NOW AROUND  
2.5 MILLION TONS, SO ALGERIA WILL BE IMPORTING SOME  
2 MILLION TONS OF WHEAT OVER NEXT TWELVE MONTHS.  
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ESTIMATES OF AVERAGE ALGERIAN PRODUCTION ARE DOWN TO  
4 - 6 BUSHEL PER HECTARE FROM 12 TO 14 UNDER THE  
FRENCH IN THE LATE 1950S. PARKER

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## Message Attributes

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